

**COMPUTER SKILLS  
CAPACITY BUILDING  
OBJECTIVES:  
MUNICIPALITY OF  
BLAGOEVGRAD**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
INITIATIVE**

**BULGARIA**

Prepared for



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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The development and improvement of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad's operational and management information systems is a key factor in improving urban service delivery in the area of streamlining real property permit issuance. In other words, a Management Information System (MIS) - in place and working - will increase the quality of one of the most frequently used municipal services, and will speed up the process.

Before implementing the Management Information System it is imperative that municipal staff capacity in the field of computerization should be understood and short- and long-term objectives for computer skills development in line with the Information Systems Master Plan be suggested.

In order to arrive at the desired degree of staff technical capabilities, the following areas should be investigated thoroughly:

- General end user capabilities and expertise
- The role of information systems department within the Municipality

The present report's aim is to determine municipal staff capacity in the field of computerization and suggest short- and long-term objectives for computer skills development. The next step is to develop a methodology for user training within an information technology upgrade plan to be implemented and monitored by a training committee. A plan for improvement of municipal computer systems capabilities is under process and will be issued by June 30, 1997 as Deliverable 3 under Municipality of Blagoevgrad Request for Services.



## **COMPUTER SKILLS CAPACITY BUILDING OBJECTIVES**

### **MUNICIPALITY OF BLAGOEVGRAD**

#### **GENERAL END-USERS**

According to our survey, the Municipality of Blagoevgrad has 106 employees organized into four major divisions (Constructions, Economic Affairs, Community Affairs and Municipal Secretary) and two Mayoral staff departments (Legal and Accounting). The organization chart on page 6 shows in more detail the structure of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad.

Out of the 106, there are 35 municipal employees who have computers on their desks. They are the main users and beneficiaries, or end-users, of the information systems available through the municipal computer network or stand-alone machines.

#### ***Familiarity with Municipal Software Applications***

Although, the average years of experience with computers (YEC) of the computer end-users is 2.5, most of them have not had any formal computer training, particularly those at the low end of the spectrum. Most of the training has been provided as “on-the-job-training”. As a result, the Municipality’s computer users have limited and very focused expertise in some specific software applications. For example, personnel at the Civil Registration Department are highly proficient in the use of the ESGRAON computer system; personnel at the Accounting Department are very familiar with the Accounting System, and so forth. Yet, very few people have knowledge of applications out of the scope of their regular work, including productivity tools, such as word-processors, spreadsheets, electronic-mail, etc. Some of these personal productivity tools might even be available but they are not widely used. One reason seems to be the limited hardware resources, particularly printers, but the lack of training is also evident.

#### ***Experience with Other Software Products***

In addition, municipal staff have been using application software that is very basic in scope and also very limited in terms of functionality. The application software on the other hand, is not maintained and upgraded regularly, and as a result it is also very stable. The result of this is that most users have no exposure to other information systems applications. Without this exposure, it is difficult for the end-users to provide appropriate feedback for the improvement of the existing applications and the implementation of new systems to support other municipal functions.

## ***Training Needs***

The need for training of end-users in the municipality is clear. Training is needed for end-users in general productivity tools as well as municipal-specific software applications.

## **TECHNICAL COMPETENCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

### ***Overview***

At present the municipality has two information technology specialists. For almost one year all information technology (IT)-related issues were handled by a single employee due to the resignation of the previous IT assistant. Budget constraints, low salaries and the lack of appropriate candidates had prevented the Municipality from hiring a replacement. A replacement was finally hired in January 1997.

The IT manager and her assistant take care of all hardware, software and related issues, including hardware installation, minor repairs, software support, user training etc. The IT manager has good technical skills and several years of experience. Yet, the wide range of responsibilities make her a good candidate for additional training.

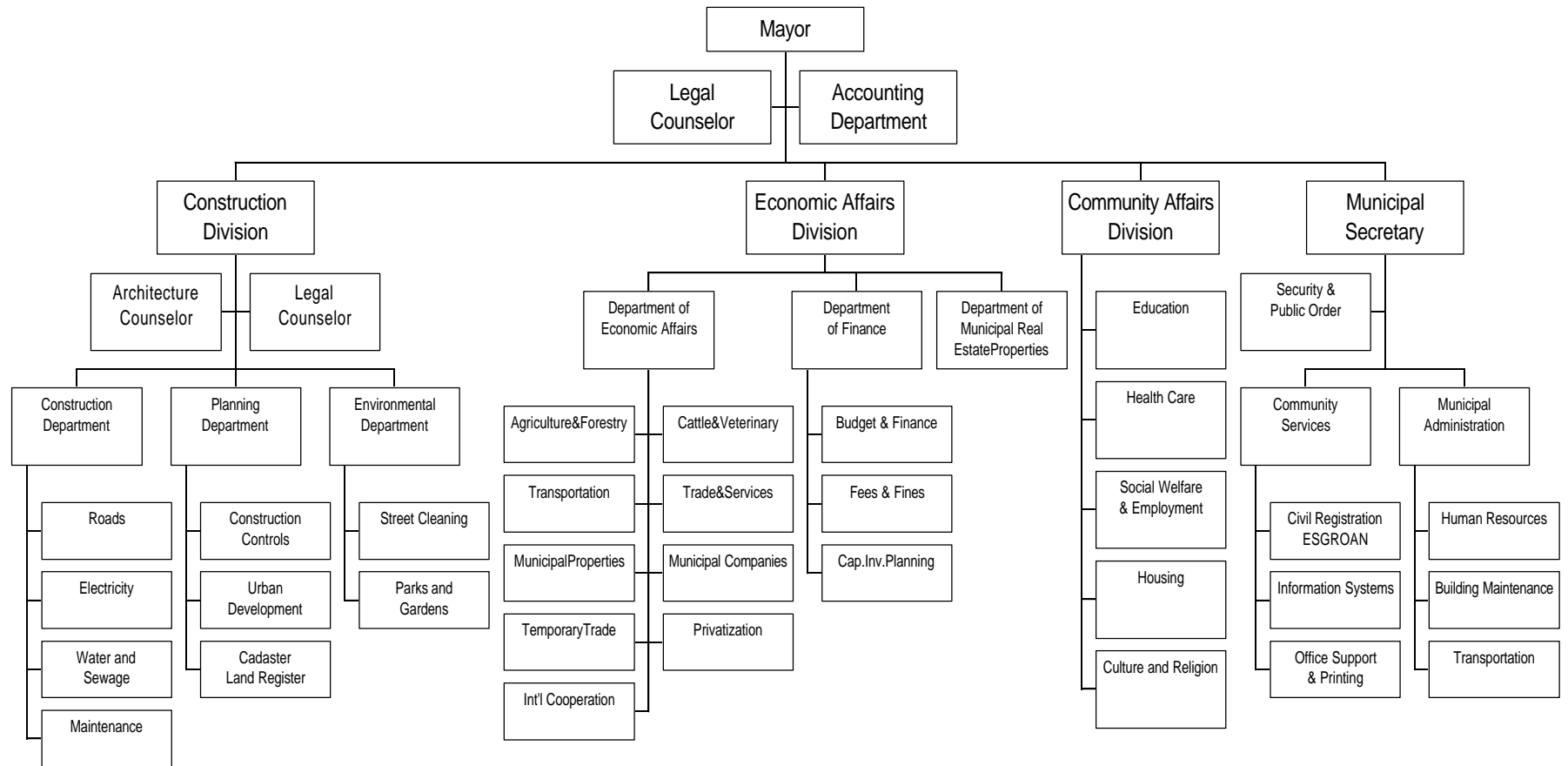
### ***Organizational Structure***

The following pages contain a complete list of the municipal staff, the level of education, degree, and the years of experience with computers (YEC) of the current position holder.





# Municipality of Blagoevgrad Organization Chart



### ***Municipal Staff Qualifications and Use of Computers***

Name	Position	Education	Degree	YEC
Ventzeslav Kojuharov	Deputy Mayor	University	Engineer	15
Rosa Vl. Bakalska	Chief expert "Budget and Finance"	University	Finance	3
Pavlina Stefanova	Accountant "Rentals"	University	Accounting	2
Nadejda Stojcheva	Chief expert "Contracts"	High School	Economics	2
Yordanka Turneva	Expert "Privatization"	University	Engineer	3
Rosa Mashratzka	Expert "Municipal companies"	High School	Engineer	1
Rosa Kajmakanova	Chief department "State and Municipal Estates"	University	Engineer	1
NA	Chief department	University	Economics	0
NA	Chief expert "International cooperation"	University	Philology	0
NA	Chief expert "Agriculture and forestry"	University	Agronomy	0
NA	Chief expert "Cattle and Veterinary"	University	Zootechnics	0
NA	Chief expert "Temporary Trade Objects"	University	Engineer	0
NA	Chief expert "Trade and Services"	University	Engineer	0
NA	Chief expert "Prices and Speculation"	University	Accounting	0
NA	Inspector "Trade"	High School	—	0
NA	Inspector "Transport"	High School	—	0
NA	Chief Department	University	Accounting	0
NA	Chief expert "Capital Investment"	University	Accounting	0
NA	Chief expert "Payroll"	University	Finance	0
NA	Chief expert "State and Municipal Estates"	University	Constructions	0
NA	Inspector "State and Municipal Estates"	High School	—	0
Kamelia Vulkova	Chief Department	University	Engineer	4
Tzvetan Poonikolov	Chief expert "Roads"	University	Engineer	0
Dimitar Markov	Chief expert "Water & sewage"	University	Engineer	0
Dimitar Filchev	Chief expert "Electricity equipment"	University	Engineer	0

Name	Position	Education	Degree	YEC
Maya Spasova	Chief expert "Water & sewage"	University	Engineer	0
NA	Deputy Mayor	University	Engineer	0
NA	Chief architect	University	Architect	0
NA	Architecture Planing	High School	—	0
NA	Chief Ecology	University	Pedagogy	0
NA	Inspectors "Cleaning" and "Gardens"	High School	—	0
NA	Chief department	University	Architect	0
NA	Chief department	University	Construction	0
NA	Inspector ACC	High School	Engineer	0
NA	Specialist ACC	University	Engineer	0
NA	Chief department	University	Architect	0
NA	Urbanist	University	Architect	0
NA	Engineer	High School	—	0
NA	Inspector "Notifications"	High School	—	0
NA	Chief department	University	Architect	0
NA	Chief expert "C&R"	University	Geodesy	0
NA	Chief expert "C&R"	University	Geodesy	0
NA	Inspector "Geodesy"	University	Geodesy	0
NA	Expert "Geodesy"	High School	—	0
NA	Inspector "C&R"	High School	—	0
NA	Inspector "Underground cadaster"	High School	—	0
NA	Drawer	High School	—	0
NA	Chief expert "Roads"	University	Engineer	0
NA	Chief expert "Water & Sewage"	University	Engineer	0
NA	Expert "Water & Sewage"	University	Engineer	0
NA	Chief expert "Electricity"	University	Engineer	0
Katya Kostova	Rental collection	High School	—	3
NA	Chief Department "Education"	University	Pedagogy	0
NA	Chief expert "Education"	University	Pedagogy	0
NA	Chief Department "Culture and religion"	University	History	0
NA	Chief expert "Healthcare"	University	Medicine	0

Name	Position	Education	Degree	YEC
NA	Chief expert "Employment"	University	Economy	0
NA	Chief expert "Social welfare"	University	—	0
NA	Inspector "Social welfare"	High School	—	0
NA	Chief expert "Housing"	University	Engineer	0
NA	Specialist "Housing"	University	Pedagogy	0
NA	Collector	University	Pedagogy	0
NA	Inspector "Housing"	High School	—	0
Vladimir Dim Spasov	Municipal Secretary	University	Economics	2
Vasilka St. Sirachevska	IT manager	University	Engineer	9
Stanislav Kolev	IT Assistant	University	Engineer	3
Katya G. Andonova	Archive	High School	Economics	3
Ely M. Ivanova	Bookkeeper	High School	Economics	3
Rositza J. Velkova	Secretary	High School	—	1
Ludmila Petrova	Chief expert "Common clerk"	University	Economics	1
Veselina Spasova	Archive and bookkeeping - Lawyers	University	Pedagogy	1
Dimitar Kehajov	Housekeeper	High School	—	1
Venetka Georgieva	Human recourses	High School	—	1
Violeta Sokolova	Typist	High School	—	1
Simeon Hristov	Manager "Printing"	High School	—	1
Petya Ivanova	Secretary	University	Pedagogy	2
Daniela Paneva	Inspector	High School	—	3
Velitchka Kostadinova	Inspector	High School	—	4
Radka Ovcharska	Expert	University	Pedagogy	3
Georgi Mangurov	Chief expert	University	Engineer	5
NA	Chief Department	University	Philology	0
NA	Chief expert	High School	—	0
NA	Bookkeeper	High School	—	0
NA	Typist	High School	—	0
NA	Worker "Printing"	High School	—	0
NA	Chief department	University	—	0
NA	Head "Complaints"	University	—	0
Margarita Koleva	Accountant	High School	—	5

Name	Position	Education	Degree	YEC
Velitchka Mitova	Chief Accountant	High School	—	1
Verdjinia Kuleva	Accountant	High School	—	1
Magdalena Kirova	Cashier	High School	—	1
Kostadin Paskalev	Mayor	University	Pedagogy	5
Yordan Grigorov	Chief expert	University	Economics	4
Not administration	Bulgarian - Greek Business center	University	Psychology	3
Nezabravka Stoeva	Chief Municipal Counselor	University	Lawyer	3
NA	Accountants	High School	—	0

## **CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE USE OF COMPUTERS**

### ***Define Framework for Training Municipal Employees***

The Municipality does not have the necessary expertise and resources to provide technical training to its employees. Following completion of all bidding procedures for selecting a supplier for the IT hardware and software, the Municipality should agree with the supplier or a firm specializing in computer-related training upon a detailed training plan for its staff.

A training committee administered by the IT specialist and including key staff involved in the MIS implementation phase must be formed. The committee should ensure that all relevant staff are fully trained in system use and then implement the MIS.

In more detail, the committee should:

- Schedule time for going on-line and specify future system additions planned;
- Institute a broad-based training program for all employees in order to orient them to the new system and to the changes it will make in their typical work day; and
- Select vendor or third party for training municipal employees in the general system's capabilities.

### ***Short-Term Capacity Building***

# **Operator training.** The vendor trains all system operators in the complete range of system features from start-up to backup. All possible errors and their appropriate corrections should be listed in great detail.

# **Programmer training.** Programming staff should be identified and receive training on custom system application software and any programming tools that are new to them.

# **Management training.** The selected training agent conducts training on system and application packages use while the training committee guides management staff through system policy and procedures training.

# **User training.** Provide users with a sound foundation for effective program use by showing each user how to operate the hardware and run the software that he/she will use.

### ***Long-Term Capacity Building***

# **Identify trends in system use.** Identify future directions of the system, especially in the areas of telecommunications and electronic messaging (Internet, e-mail) and train staff in the use of related hardware and software within the framework of improvements in service delivery to the citizens.

# **Identify external sources of information.** Gradually train staff in the establishment and use of electronic connections to national and other institutions that the municipality exchanges information with.

# **Cross training.** Bearing in mind that no system operation should depend exclusively upon specific staff. More than one person should be identified and trained to do each job. It is also important to educate new employees continuously about the system and to report to all employees about the system's continued effectiveness.